

# Commander Seventh Fleet Ombudsmen Newsletter

January 2004 Volume 1 Edition 12



**H**appy New Year! It is time to say farewell to another year and look at 2004 with all its wonderful new beginnings. While 2003 is just a memory and the calendar shows a bright new 2004, prepare yourself for a great New Year! Some of us may be writing or memorizing our New Year resolutions to help make this a bang of a year. If you take part in this long time tradition, not only look upon the past but also the future. For those of us who just can't keep to our resolutions, not to worry. You can find comfort in that as long as this tradition has been around, there is no proof that anyone kept to their resolutions either :) Be light at heart; enjoy your loved ones and most of all have a wonderful and happy New Year. We wish each of you the very best, and may all your resolutions come true!

## **Commissary officials sensitive to beef concerns**

By Bonnie Powell, [bonnie.powell@deca.mil](mailto:bonnie.powell@deca.mil)

FORT LEE, Va. - Officials at the Defense Commissary Agency are closely monitoring the ever-changing situation involving a case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), also known as "mad cow" disease, identified Dec. 23 in a single cow in Washington state.

Since Dec. 23 the U.S. Department of Agriculture has conducted a limited recall of 10,000 pounds of beef that may originate from the infected cow and from cows slaughtered at the same time and location. "No beef in any of our 275 commissaries worldwide has been involved in a USDA recall," said Col. Mark Wolken, chief of public health, safety and security for DeCA. "The USDA has stated that the U.S. beef supply is safe and that the beef recall resulted from an abundance of caution, not fear that the meat is infected. Should the USDA make a determination that there is a danger, DeCA would be first to react to protect the health of our customers," he said. Since the first U.S. case of BSE was identified Dec. 23, commissary customers have raised questions about the safety of beef purchased at their local commissary. Questions range from "should I return the ground beef I bought last week?" to "has my commissary received meat from the infected cow?" The answer to both questions is "no" said Wolken, an Army veterinarian. "As is always the case, customers who wish to return commissary products for a full refund may do so without question. The brain, spinal cord, and lower intestine - where the protein or 'prion' that is believed to cause BSE is found - are not generally used in food consumed by Americans. Those parts were removed from the infected cow before any of it could enter the meat supply."

USDA investigators have determined that the recalled meat went to a few commercial markets in Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana and Guam as well as Washington State, Oregon, California and Nevada. "No commissaries received any of those shipments," Wolken emphasized. "But I can certainly understand customers having concerns and questions. We're all affected by this - we're all concerned."

Mad cow is a fatal disease that destroys the brains of the infected animal. It is caused in cattle by misshapen proteins called prions and is thought to be spread from animal to animal through contaminated feed. A rare form of the disease in humans known as variant Creutzfeldt - Jakob disease has been linked to the consumption of contaminated beef products. The approximately 140 deaths linked to "mad cow" since the mid-90s have mainly been in Britain.

For the latest developments on the current situation as well as for links to the USDA and other information on recalls and food safety, commissary customers should check the food safety link at

<http://www.commissaries.com>.

- DeCA -

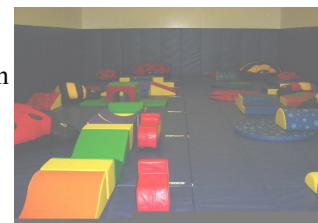
## **BASE NEWS**

### **Gym Play Area Just For Kids!**



Area is located inside Thew Gym and is intended for children 4 and under. This is a 100% parent supervised room. Please do not leave your child(ren) unattended at any time!

Open during normal Thew Gym Hours! For more information Call 243-5398



### **Fast Office has relocated!**

The Fast Office is now located in the old middle school building between the USA Federal Credit Union parking lot and the Post Office.  
POC: 243-5770



### **Kerosene Heater Safety**

Fleet & Family Support Center offers a great class. Be safe and call the FFSC today~ 243-3372



### **Get healthy, get in shape!**

Fleet Rec offers personal trainers to help you get in shape. Your first 5 sessions are free and they will show you how to get in shape the right way.

POC: MWR Fleet Rec



### **Emergency Pet Care Services**

After hours veterinary services can be received from our Yokosuka Base Veterinary Clinic. Call 090-1106-3894 after normal clinic hours.



### **Care Line Phone Number**

243-9367

**If you have any questions or concerns please contact us!**

Email: [comm7thflombudsman@yahoo.com](mailto:comm7thflombudsman@yahoo.com)

